

SUBJECTS.

19. *Legislation on the Christian law of succession and inheritance. (Chiefly as to the rights of women).*

He said that, when this subject had been brought forward at the Third Session of the Assembly, the then Dewan had asked for a joint representation from the community and accordingly the Memorial was now submitted. The Member requested that Government might consider the Memorial sympathetically.

Dewan's reply.—Government will consider the matter carefully.

Mr. N. E. Varghese (Member, Travancore and Cochin Christian Association) urged the necessity of appointing a Commission to enquire into and report upon the various customs among the several sections of the Christian community in Travancore, relating to succession and inheritance, chiefly as to the rights of women.

Mr. Uthuppan Thomman (Member, Changanacherry Taluk) stated that there was no statute governing succession and inheritance among the various sections of the Christian community and that all disputes were being settled amicably without going to law. Nevertheless, the Member pointed out the necessity for the passing of a Regulation defining the rules relating to succession and inheritance among the Christians. Even though no disputes might arise in the matter of inheritance by sons, of their fathers' properties, disputes might arise in the case of women who might claim shares either in the properties of their husbands or of their fathers. As there was no definite law as to the rights of women in the matter of inheritance and succession, he suggested that a Conference might be summoned to discuss the subject and to submit a Bill defining the law of succession and inheritance among the Christian community.

Dewan:—Do you want Government

Member:—It would be well if Government legislate? address all the Christian Associations and ask them to prepare a Bill for the consideration of Government.

The Dewan then invited the opinions of the other Christian Members of the Assembly, and they gave the following opinions:—

Mr. Jacob Kuriyan:—Our Associations are under Bishops, etc. It is rather difficult to get a Bill prepared by the Associations. The initiative should be taken by the Government.

Mr. K. M. Mamman Mappilla:—I wish to have a Committee to investigate the matter.

SUBJECTS.

*Mr. K. K. Kuruvila :—*The time has not come for legislation in this matter. If it comes to that, I would prefer a Commission to hold a thorough enquiry. But my opinion is to leave matters alone.

Mr. K. C. Mamman Mappilla :— A Commission should be appointed to enquire into the matter.

*Mr. Kuruvila Thomman :—*I have no decided ideas on the subject.

*Mr. Kuriakose :—*The Church authorities should be consulted.

*Mr. Paul Daniel :—*I see no necessity for legislation.

*Mr. W. J. John :—*I think legislation is necessary.

*Mr. P. M. Chacko :—*Legislation will be useful.

*Dewan's reply :—*The views of the several Members are noted.

20. Disabilities of converts to Christianity in the matter of inheritance & certain objectionable words in the Marumakkattayam Bill affecting Christian sentiments.

Mr. Stephen Joseph (Member, Roman Catholic Associations, Quilon, Trivandrum and Nagercoil) said that, in several previous Sessions of the Assembly, the same subject had been repeatedly brought forward, by not less than six delegates representing different Associations of Christian interest. These Members had fully and clearly pointed out the necessity for legislation. But the Government were not pleased to take a favourable view of the representation. The Member said that it was therefore a matter of deep regret and disappointment to the constituencies, to hear that their reasonable requests for impartial and equitable laws, were rejected or taken no notice of, because of the existence of certain hide-bound customs of a different community. In the Third Session of the Assembly, the then Dewan said that interference with the law of inheritance was beset with numerous difficulties, and it was not expedient that Government should undertake legislation in the present circumstances of the country. The replies at the two previous Sessions were neither encouraging nor decisive. The Member requested that Government might be pleased to reconsider the question and take early steps to pass an Act, removing the disabilities of converts to Christianity in the matter of inheritance.

*Dewan's reply :—*Noted.

21. Judicial matters.

Mr. K. Sankara Pillai (Member, Kottarakara Taluk) brought to the notice of Government that the transaction of business in the Munsiffs' Courts was very unsatisfactory. He said that there were large arrears in all classes of Courts and in almost all branches of work. He also pointed out